CHAPTER 16

Visions of National Identity

Figure 16-1 Jane Ash Poitras, a Cree-Chipewyan artist from Alberta, created this mural — *Those Who Share Together, Stay Together.* The artwork, which measures 3.7 metres by 4.3 metres, presents her view of Canada's history and her hopes for the country's future.

Jane Ash Poitras — In Her Own Words

On her inspiration for the mural

> I thought about Canada being part of Mother Earth, so the middle part shows Canada's landscape, with Québec as the heart of the country and the Maritimes as the birthplace. I also put Native elements on the provincial shields at the top and used a Québec Montagnais design for the Québec section.

On finding ways to live together peaceably and with justice

> We have to be colour blind. For example, I use a lot of colour in my art, but I don't see myself as a Native artist. I see myself as a person. I want to know about other people's heritage, culture, and beliefs, but it doesn't matter what colour they are.

CHAPTER ISSUE

Should I embrace a national identity?

In 1997, Jane Ash Poitras created *Those Who Share Together, Stay Together* for the art gallery of the Confederation Centre of the Arts in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. The mural is part of an exhibit titled Telling Stories: Narratives of Nationhood.

The gallery describes the purpose of the exhibit: "Looking at artistic voices represented across Canada, it becomes clear that our identity — who and what we are as individuals, communities, regions, and a country — can never be told in just one story. The cultures, histories, and relationships among Canadian communities have always been changing."

Poitras's mural captured this spirit. Examine the mural and respond to these questions:

- Which world events and histories do you think influenced Jane Ash Poitras as she created this mural?
- Which national identities are represented in the mural?
- How would you interpret Poitras's vision of Canada's future?
- What is the significance of the title of the mural?
- If you were creating a mural showing your vision of Canada's past and future, what images would you include? What might you title it?
- How would your images represent your national identity?

KEY TERMS

cosmopolitan

asymmetrical federalism

Looking Ahead

In this chapter, you will explore whether you should embrace a national identity. You will do this by developing responses to the following questions:

- What are some visions of nation?
- What are some visions of Canada?
- What is your vision of national identity?

My Journal on Nationalism

As you worked through the previous 15 chapters, you recorded your thoughts on your understandings of nationalism. As you progress through this final chapter, try to develop your own response to the key course issue: Should we embrace nationalism?

What are some visions of nation?

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You explored understandings of nation and the concept of a civic nation in Chapter 1.

National identity is, in general, a group identity that is based on linguistic, ethnic, cultural, religious, geographic, spiritual, or political understandings of nation. It can also be a combination of two or more of these understandings.

People sometimes combine these understandings of nation with a sense of themselves as a civic nation. Japan, for example, can be viewed as a civic nation because it has a parliamentary government and a legal system based in civil law. But most Japanese people also share common racial, cultural, and religious traits. They also share a language — Japanese.

The national identity of the Japanese people evolved over centuries. For hundreds of years, Japanese people identified mainly with the feudal lords who ruled their region of the country. But in the 19th century, when Japan united against threats of invasion, a sense of national identity began to emerge.

In the years leading up to World War II, all Japanese students were taught patriotism and respect for traditional culture and beliefs. In 2006, Japan passed a law requiring teachers to evaluate each student's level of patriotism and interest in their country's traditional culture.

If your interest in patriotism and Canadian culture were counted into the marks you receive at school, how do you think you would do? How might this affect your sense of national identity?

When nations do not have a country of their own, their national identity may be based on a religion, language, or culture. Tibet, for example, has been Buddhist since the eighth century. Many people speak the Tibetan language and follow ancient cultural traditions.

But by 2008, many ethnic Chinese were settling in Tibet. This was changing the makeup of Tibet's population. Tibetan leaders now estimate that ethnic Chinese people outnumber ethnic Tibetans. Many ethnic Tibetans want to be free of Chinese control and determine for themselves how their nation will evolve. But this may become more and more difficult as the population continues to change.

FYI

Manga cartoons began in Japan. This style of graphic novel has been exported around the world. But some recent Japanese manga books have begun to encourage hatred of other cultures. One of these, *The 100 Crimes of China*, describes China as the most evil country in the world. Another is titled *Why We Should Hate South Korea*. Though most Japanese condemn these books, they have found a small audience.

Figure 16-2 Pilgrims at Tibet's holiest Buddhist shrine pray during Tibetan New Year celebrations. The Jokhang Temple in Lhasa is 1300 years old. Some pilgrims spend years travelling on foot over great distances to reach this shrine. What do actions like this say about the Tibetan national identity?

Pluralism and Diversity

By 2008, more people than ever were migrating around the world. The citizens of many countries — including Canada and the United States — come from diverse backgrounds and cultures. They bring unique experiences, points of view, and perspectives to their new homes.

A pluralistic society is a society that respects diversity. It assumes that diversity helps everyone, and that peoples of all cultures, religions, languages, and philosophies have the right to enjoy some degree of self-determination.

Evolving Identities

When people move from one country to another, they are exposed to many different cultures. This can change both their individual identity and their national identity.

A Canadian doctor, for example, who was born in India of Indian and Pakistani parents may have close ties to family and friends in both countries. She may maintain these ties through telephone calls and e-mail messages. She may have studied tropical medicine in London, England, and met other students from many areas of the world. She may be volunteering with Doctors Without Borders and share strong humanitarian values with other volunteers who work with this organization.

People with a background like this are sometimes described as **cosmopolitan**. They borrow, adopt, and adapt values from many cultures. They often believe that civic nationalism is a way to support pluralistic and cosmopolitan values. Canadian historian and politician Michael Ignatieff says that "a cosmopolitan, post-nationalist spirit will always depend . . . on the capacity of nation-states to provide security and civility for their citizens."

Identity and Choice

When law and order broke down in countries such as Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, pluralism and diversity could not survive. Economist Amartya Sen argues that freedom of choice is the key to balancing conflicting national identities. People can choose different identities only if they have the freedom to do so. If they have no freedom, they may be forced to accept a particular national identity.

"If a person can have only one identity, then the choice between the national and global becomes an 'all or nothing' contest," Sen wrote in *Identity and Violence*. "But to see the problem [this way] shows a profound misunderstanding of the nature of human identity, in particular its inescapable plurality."

Do you believe that you have only one national identity? Or do you feel free to explore and embrace various national identities?

Web Connection

To find out more about diversity in Canada, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.UnderstandingNationalism.ca

Figure 16-3 Nobel Prize–winner Amartya Sen (right) is a true cosmopolitan. Though born in India, he has travelled the world studying and writing about economics. He is best known for his work with the world's poorest people and his ideas for solving the problem of famine. He is now a professor at Harvard University in the United States.

Figure 16-4 British Residents Who Were Born Abroad* — Selected Statistics, 2001

Country of Birth	Number	Percentage of New Immigrants Employed
Australia	106 404	91
Bangladesh	154 201	43
Canada	70 145	83
Germany	262 276	69
India	466 416	66
Italy	107 002	73
Iraq	32 251	38
Kenya	129 356	61
Pakistan	320 767	44
South Africa	140 201	82
United States	155 030	68

* "Born abroad" means born outside England, Scotland, and Wales.
Source: BBC News, Institute for Public Policy Research

Pluralism in Britain

Building a pluralistic country that genuinely respects and appreciates diversity can be challenging. In Britain, for example, the 2001 census showed that more than 7.5 per cent of the population was born outside the country. Many of the newcomers had arrived in search of economic prosperity and a better quality of life.

Some British people believe that the country's immigration system does not work. They believe that the increased population strains public services. Others are afraid that immigrants are changing Britain's traditional national identity. They worry when they see immigrants staying in ethnic, cultural, or religious neighbourhoods away from mainstream British culture.

Fears like these became more pronounced in July 2005, when four young men detonated bombs on three London subway cars and a bus. They injured 770 people and killed themselves and 52 others. Three of the bombers were British citizens of Pakistani descent; the fourth arrived from Jamaica as a child.

After the bombings, the British Commission for Racial Equality said that British society is becoming more divided by race and religion: "We are becoming more unequal by ethnicity . . . We are becoming strangers to each other, and we are leaving communities to be marooned outside the mainstream."

The British government began developing programs to promote British unity. One of the initiatives is a test requiring new citizens to show that they understand British history, customs, laws, and values.

Figure 16-5 During colonial times, the British game of cricket was exported to Canada, India, the West Indies, and other colonies. Star cricketer Sunil Dhaniram was born in Guyana but now plays for Canada. Dhaniram is shown here playing for Canada in the 2007 Cricket World Cup. How might the popularity of athletes such as Dhaniram help increase acceptance of pluralism in Canada?

Recall . . . Reflect . . . Respond

1. Many of the questions on the British citizenship test focus on traditional British history. Is it fair to ask potential citizens to pass a test like this? Explain your reasons.
2. Some people hold citizenship in two or more countries. Do you think a person should be allowed to claim citizenship in more than one country? Why or why not?

What are some visions of Canada?

From its earliest days, Canada was known as a nation composed of many different peoples. On July 1, 1867, politician Thomas D'Arcy McGee, one of the Fathers of Confederation, captured this vision when he said, "So long as we respect in Canada the rights of minorities, told either by tongue or creed [beliefs or religion], we are safe. For so long it will be possible for us to be united."

Reread McGee's words. How do they reflect the makeup of Canada in 1867? How do they reflect ideas about Canada today?

A few decades later, this vision remained strong. Wilfrid Laurier was the first Francophone prime minister of Canada. He held this post from 1896 to 1911 and compared the country to a cathedral. "It is the image of the nation I would like to see Canada become," Laurier said. "For here I want the marble to remain the marble; the granite to remain the granite; the oak to remain the oak, and out of these elements I would build a nation great among the nations of the world."

As the 20th century unfolded, Canada welcomed more and more immigrants from more and more parts of the world. The country changed as Canada became even more diverse.

Today, Canada is often described as a civic nation with a national identity based on shared values and beliefs expressed in law. The values shared by Canadians are written into the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which is part of the Constitution. The Constitution sets out the kind of country Canadians want to live in. The values and beliefs that bind Canadians together are important aspects of Canadian national identity.

The politicians, all men, who put together Confederation in 1867 are often called the Fathers of Confederation. Why do you think there were no Mothers of Confederation?

Figure 16-6 In 2006, members of visible minority groups made up 16.2 per cent of Canada's population. Toronto, where these commuters were waiting together for a train, is the most ethnically diverse city in the country. Nearly 47 per cent of Toronto residents are members of visible minority groups.

A Pluralistic Country

Public opinion polls show that a high percentage of Canadians are proud of and support the country's multicultural and pluralistic nature. Canadians view multiculturalism and pluralism as characteristics that make Canada different from other countries.

In a 2008 survey by CTV and *The Globe and Mail*, 88 per cent of people who responded said that they believed that their community welcomes people from visible minority groups. But at the same time, 61 per cent said that Canada was doing too much to help members of visible minority groups adjust to life in Canada. This figure rose to 72 per cent in Québec.

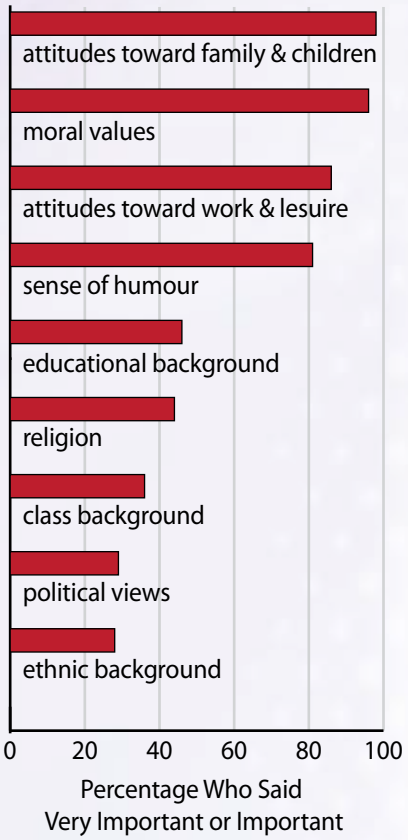
Though people are concerned about multiculturalism and pluralism, many observers believe that these policies have helped create a new form of nationalism in Canada. Author and editor Edward Greenspon said that this new nationalism enables people to be who they are while still belonging to a larger group.

For many Canadians, ethnic ties are no longer their first concern. More and more Canadians also say that they are of mixed ethnic background. This was shown in a 2003 survey that found that many people view ethnic background as the least important factor when choosing a spouse.

Examine the survey results in Figure 16-7 on this page. How would you respond to each question? Based on the results of this survey, what conclusions might you draw about how well multiculturalism and pluralism are working in Canada?

Figure 16-7 Important Factors When Choosing a Spouse

When choosing a husband or wife, is it very important, important, not very important, or not at all important that both people share similar . . .



Source: *A New Canada: An Identity Shared by Diversity*. Centre for Research and Information on Canada, October 2003

Diversity in Alberta

Alberta's population grew by 10.6 per cent between 2001 and 2006. During the same period, the population of Canada increased by 5.4 per cent. In 2001, about 6.9 per cent of immigrants to Canada chose to settle in Alberta. By 2006, this figure had risen to 9.3 per cent.

During the same period, many migrants from other provinces and territories also moved to Alberta. Migration from within Canada increased Alberta's population by more than 88 000.

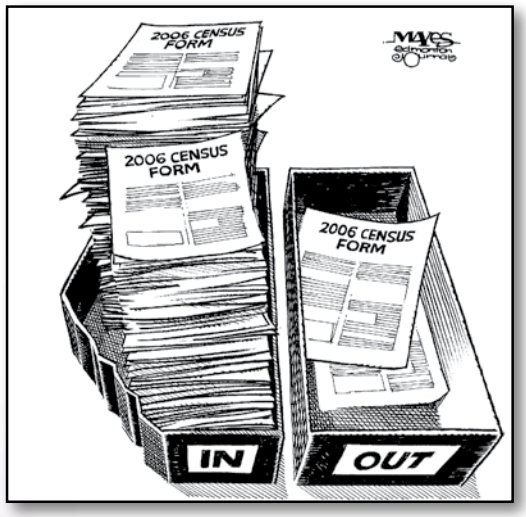


Figure 16-8 Malcolm Mayes, cartoonist for the *Edmonton Journal*, created this cartoon in 2007. It comments on the difference between the number of people moving into and out of Alberta. How do you think the province's changing population will affect Albertans' individual and collective identities?

Alberta's Changing Communities

Many people believe that Alberta's increasing diversity will strengthen the province's communities. Others fear that diversity may result in divisions within or between communities.

But the manager and staff at Westend Suzuki, an Edmonton car dealership, have found that diversity has direct economic benefits. In 2007, staff at the dealership spoke English and French, as well as 13 other languages: Mandarin, Punjabi, Italian, Cantonese, Hindi, Spanish, Scottish Gaelic, Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Dutch, and Filipino.

Web Connection

To find out about Alberta government programs to promote human rights and diversity, go to this web site and follow the links.

www.UnderstandingNationalism.ca

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Zarqa Nawaz
Breaking Down Stereotypes

Figure 16-9 The first film Zarqa Nawaz made was a short comedy called *BBQ Muslims*. It tells the story of two brothers who are suspected of terrorism after their barbecue explodes. Nawaz has also created a documentary titled *Me and the Mosque*.

When Zarqa Nawaz was creating the hit CBC TV series *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, one of her goals was to break down stereotypes and bring people together. "I see the show as a way to show young Canadians that it is possible to live in an ethnic community peacefully despite religious differences," she told an online discussion sponsored by *The Globe and Mail*.

Little Mosque is about a Muslim community in the fictional Saskatchewan town of Mercy. Every episode features a humorous look at the relations among the Muslim characters — and their relations with non-Muslim townspeople.

Born in England to Pakistani parents, Nawaz immigrated to Canada with her family, who settled in Toronto. She began wearing the hijab, a traditional Muslim headscarf, when she was in Grade 9. Nawaz has attended a mosque most of her life. For the past few years, she has lived in Saskatoon with her husband and children.

Writing a sitcom about the everyday life of a particular ethnic or religious group presents challenges. It is often hard for immigrants to Canada to find a place in their new country, and the struggle to adjust to a new culture may create tensions.

Nawaz believes that using humour to deal with these issues is risky — but can be highly effective. "I've always reacted to very difficult subjects with humour," she said. "The only way I can deal with these issues is to make them more universal . . . to get across the ridiculousness of what is happening and the paranoia and worry that exists now in the community." Besides, she added, humour can encourage people to think about serious issues.

Nawaz said that her own experience growing up in Canada was positive — and she believes that Canadians have made pluralism work. "The fact that I can be comfortable with my Canadian identity along with my Islamic identity proves to me that it's working."

EXPLORATIONS

1. Many doctors believe that humour plays a positive role in healing the body. With a partner, list several ways that humour might be used to heal unhealthy attitudes and break down prejudice.
2. Imagine you are writing a series about the national identity of a particular ethnic, cultural, or religious group. What kinds of issues might you try to deal with? Create at least one scenario that could become the basis of an episode. Remember to use respectful language.

It is wrong to ignore the historical rights that Aboriginal people still enjoy as self-governing political entities — rights that Canada undertook to safeguard as we were struggling toward nationhood.

— People to People, Nation to Nation: The Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *1996*

The dream of a Canada as a uni-national state was always a fiction, a fiction rooted historically in the [belittling] of French and Aboriginal cultures.

— *Will Kymlicka, political philosopher, 1998*

A Nation of Many Nations

Today, some Canadians view Canada as a confederation of many nations. This is not a new idea. Confederations of First Nations existed in North America before the arrival of Europeans. By the 1500s, some peoples in North America had decided that it was in their best interests to organize themselves into multinational alliances. Their goals were to protect themselves from enemies and to promote trade.

Among these alliances was the League of Haudenosaunee, also known as the Iroquois or Five Nations Confederacy. This social and political system was originally made up of the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca Nations. In the early 1700s, this alliance became the Six Nations Confederacy when the Tuscarora Nation joined.

Each nation looked after its own internal affairs, but all agreed to work together for protection and trade. A council of 50 chiefs ruled the League. They represented the peoples and met when the need arose.

The league was guided by The Constitution of the Iroquois Nations: The Great Binding Law, Gayanashagowa. This set of laws was passed on orally from generation to generation. Rules governed the duties and rights of those who held specific positions. Family matters such as adoption, the structure of clans, and the role of women in society were also covered. Action was taken only after all six nations had reached a consensus.

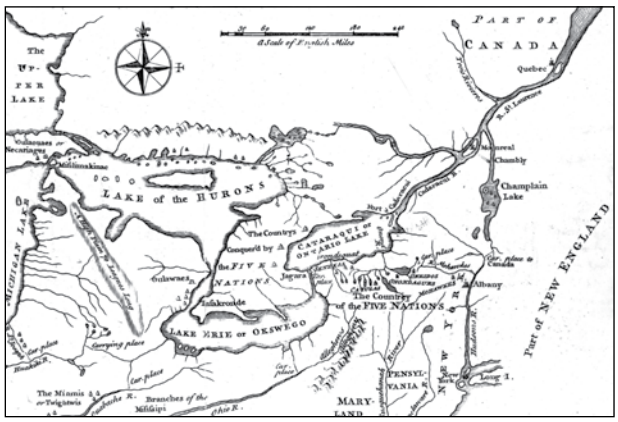


Figure 16-10 This early map shows the territory of the Five Nations of the Haudenosaunee in 1650. Their land was in areas that are now parts of New York State and Ontario.

Aboriginal Nations Today

The 1996 report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples made it clear that Canada is a nation of nations. It said that Aboriginal governments are "one of three orders of government in Canada — federal, provincial/territorial, and Aboriginal."

In a 2003 study of participation by Aboriginal people in Canada's elections, political scientist Alan C. Cairns wrote: "To [the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples], 'nation' was the fundamental unit of analysis, and the relation between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian State was to be nation-to-nation. Canada was to become a multinational federation in which interactions would be among nations, not citizens."

Unfinished Business

Aboriginal people view themselves as nations whose Aboriginal and treaty rights are confirmed in Canada's Constitution. Aboriginal leaders agree that they wish to remain nations within Canada. But progress in achieving their goals has been slow — despite the recommendations of the royal commission.

The Indian Act remains in force and Aboriginal peoples continue to face many challenges. Among these is the fact that, in 2008, more than 800 specific land claims had not been settled.

In its report, the royal commission said that its recommendations could be carried out within 20 years. In 2006, on the 10th anniversary of the release of the commission's report, the Assembly of First Nations issued a "report card" on progress — and gave the federal government a failing mark.

Figure 16-11 Canada's prime minister apologizes on behalf of all Canadians for the abuse suffered by Aboriginal children and their families. Shown here are the oldest and youngest survivors of this tragic period in Canada's history. Seated in the House of Commons on June 11, 2008, were Marguerite Wabano (right) who was 104, and Crystal Merasty (left), who was 19.

A Government Apology

Two years later, on June 11, 2008, the government of Canada took a historic step. Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized to First Nations in Canada for the treatment of their people in residential schools. For more than a century, these schools had been the cause of great suffering for young Aboriginal children and their families. The practice of forcing Aboriginal children to go to schools far from home had destroyed thousands of lives. Children were forbidden to speak their own language and to learn about their own culture and traditions.

How do you think Harper's apology will affect future relations between the government of Canada and First Nations?

The Québécois Nation

In recent years, Québec sovereignists have lost support among Québécois voters. In the 2007 provincial election, the sovereignist Parti Québécois placed third. For the first time since 1973, the PQ formed neither the government nor the official opposition.

A year later, the PQ announced that it was abandoning its plan to hold another sovereignty referendum if it regained power. Instead, it pledged to engage the people of Québec in debate about self-determination and sovereignty.

PQ leader Pauline Marois said, "It will always be difficult for a small people speaking French in America to assume its place, to continue to exist. It cannot be otherwise. There are 300 million anglophones surrounding us. We have to find ways to clearly indicate that in Québec, things happen in French."

With a partner, roleplay a conversation that might occur between two Parti Québécois members — one who supports another referendum and one who thinks the party should engage in debate. Raise at least two points to support your position.

Figure 16-12 In the 2007 Québec election, Mario Dumont led the Action Démocratique du Québec to a position as the province's official opposition party for the first time. Founded in 1994, the ADQ is a nationalist party that supports greater self-determination — but not outright sovereignty — for Québec. What does the ADQ's strong showing say about the attitudes of Québec voters?

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You read about reasonable accommodation in Chapter 3.

Figure 16-13 Although Brigitte Haentjens, shown accepting an award in 2005, is a Francophone, she says that she does not feel welcome among Québécois. Can reasonable accommodation help Haentjens and other immigrants to Québec feel more comfortable in their new home?

Québec and Reasonable Accommodation

In the early 21st century, reasonable accommodation became an issue in Québec. Various minority groups argued that they were not being encouraged to affirm and promote their own culture and traditions — and to feel as if they belonged in Québec.

Brigitte Haentjens, for example, is an award-winning theatre director who was born in France but who has worked in both Ontario and Québec. In an interview with the *Montreal Gazette*, she summed up the feelings of many immigrants: "I can't be Québécois." Haentjens said that she feels more at home among the Francophone minority in Ontario than in Francophone Québec.

The issue of reasonable accommodation came to a head in early 2007, when the council of the small Québec town of Hérouxville adopted a code of conduct for immigrants. Even though no immigrants actually live in the town, the code included restrictions on both family and religious matters. Several nearby towns passed similar codes.

In response to these actions, Québec premier Jean Charest established a commission to explore the challenges of reasonable accommodation in the province. The commission chairs, Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, travelled the province to hear from individuals and groups.

In their report, Bouchard and Taylor wrote: "The foundations of collective life in Quebec are not in a critical situation." But Québécois must adapt to the new reality of its diverse society — and the government must play an important role in developing policies and laws that will help everyone feel at home.

Meaning of a Nation of Nations

Political philosopher Will Kymlicka believes that Canadians outside Québec view Canada as a single national community. This community includes all citizens, no matter what their language, ethnicity, or religion. But this is not the view of many Québécois.

Thinkers such as Kymlicka believe that if Canada is to survive as a country of many nations, Canadians must embrace the idea of asymmetrical federalism. Under **asymmetrical federalism**, all provinces and territories would not share power with the federal government in the same way. The differing linguistic and cultural needs of provinces, territories, and regions would be accommodated by allowing them to exercise differing degrees of control in important areas, such as immigration.

Some asymmetrical federalism already exists in Canada. Québec, for example, already exercises more control over immigration than other provinces. But the issue is controversial. Some believe that it could undermine Canadian unity because it threatens the principle of provincial equality.

➔ With a partner, discuss how adopting asymmetrical federalism might affect Canadian national identity. Explain your response.

THE VIEW FROM HERE

The Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988 affirmed that Canadians have a constitutional right "to the equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination and that everyone has the freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, expression, peaceful assembly and association." But how successful is multiculturalism in Canada? Here is how three Canadians have responded to this question.

Michael Adams is a co-founder of the polling company Environics Research Group. In 2007, he said that the children of immigrants have no problem dealing with contending national loyalties.

> [Children of immigrants] are proud to be Canadians, but they are also proud of their ethnic, religious, racial background. In a lot of the polling, we're asking them to choose between the two. They say, "Well, I feel a deeper attachment to my Muslim status." And then immediately you jump to the conclusion that they don't love Canada.
>
> Well, actually, they do love Canada. And they actually think that, when they say they're proud Canadians, they can also be proud Muslims and also citizens of the world. They're trying to communicate subtle, postmodern multiple identity.

In his 2007 book, *Multicultural Odysseys: Navigating the New International Politics of Diversity*, political philosopher **Will Kymlicka** wrote that multicultural countries are successful countries.

> There are a few things we can say with some confidence about the effects of multiculturalism in practice. None of the countries that have moved along the multiculturalist path in the West have subsequently descended into civil war or anarchy, or faced military coups, or suffered economic collapse. On the contrary, even a casual inspection of the list of countries which are "strong" in their commitment to multiculturalism policies shows that they are amongst the most peaceful, stable, and prosperous societies on the planet.

In 2007, **Gilles Duceppe**, leader of the separatist Bloc Québécois, expressed this view on how reasonable accommodation should work in Québec.

> Multiculturalism as a model of integration does not work in Québec. Immigrant cultures and beliefs must merge with Québec's culture and beliefs if the latter [Québec culture] is to survive. [Immigrants] are coming to a nation with values, a culture, and history. The model developed in Québec reflects that reality. It's in total contradiction with the definition of a Canada that is bilingual and multicultural.

EXPLORATIONS

1. Imagine that you are a researcher who is interviewing immigrants to find out whether they think multiculturalism in Canada has been a success or a failure. Write three questions you would ask to help you get the information you need (e.g., Have people in your community helped you feel welcome? or Have you been able to find others from your home country in your community?).
2. Would you expect the immigrants you interview to say that multiculturalism has been successful? Explain why or why not.

A Divided Canada

After gaining independence, some countries have divided into more than one nation-state. This is what happened in India, which divided at first into India and Pakistan. Later, Pakistan divided again. Bangladesh, which had been East Pakistan, became independent.

In the 1990s, the separatist movement in Québec was at its peak. It looked as if Canada might divide. This did not happen, but Québec is not the only province or region to consider separation. Some Westerners also want to leave Confederation. But this idea is not widely supported, and the Western separation movement is not nearly as strong as the sovereignist movement in Québec.

If people in one province or territory wanted to separate from Canada, what political and economic challenges might result?

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You read about the division of India into the countries of India and Pakistan in Chapter 8.

Two nations have evolved that are utterly alike in almost all of their externals and yet are utterly unalike in their political cultures so that they are as distinct from each other as are the Germans from the French, say, even though both are Europeans just as Canadians and Americans are both North Americans.

— Richard Gwyn, journalist and political commentator, in The 49th Paradox: Canada in North America, *1987*

North American Integration

Canadians have a lot in common with Americans. Both Canada and the United States are democracies, and English is the main language in both countries. Canadians and Americans also dress much the same way, listen to much the same music, watch many of the same TV programs, and follow many of the same sports. As a result, people from other parts of the world often find it hard to tell the difference between citizens of the two countries.

Some people have suggested that Canada and the United States should join together. Though this idea is not very popular in either country, some people think that it could happen. When Canada and the U.S. entered into the Free Trade Agreement, for example, many individuals and groups warned that this economic union was the first step toward a political union.

After the attacks on the U.S. on September 11, 2001, the American government's preoccupation with security also affected Canada. For decades before this, the Canada–U.S. border had been called the longest undefended border in the world. But after 9/11, the American government viewed this openness as an opportunity for terrorists to sneak into the U.S. As a result, armed patrols now guard the border in many areas, and surveillance has increased. Strict rules govern who can enter the United States.

Figure 16-14 Canadians have long been able to cross the Canada–U.S. border without a passport. But with increased security, it can now take much longer to clear customs and security. As an alternative to a passport, the NEXUS card was designed to help speed this process. Canadians and Americans who enrol in the NEXUS program will be able to cross the border more quickly. The card is available to "low-risk" travellers.

Cross-Border Co-operation

In 2002, Canada and the U.S. created the Binational Planning Group. The group's goal is to increase co-operation between the two countries in the areas of foreign policy, defence, and security. This involves co-ordinating maritime surveillance, sharing intelligence, and conducting joint military exercises. One of the group's first actions was to bring about a bilateral pact that allows troops from one country to cross the border to help police and firefighters deal with emergencies in the other country.

On a scale of 1 to 5, rate how close you think Canada and the United States are to political union (1 = not very close; 5 = very close). Does your sense of Canadian identity affect your response? Explain why or why not.

Canada and the U.S. have made many trade and defence agreements. Does this mean that Canada has already become part of the U.S. — even if Canadians and American don't know it?

Taking Turns

Is North American integration a good idea?

The students responding to this question are Rick, who was born in the United States but moved to Fort McMurray with his family when he was 10; Harley, who is a member of the Kainai Nation near Lethbridge; and Jean, a Francophone student who lives in Calgary.

Rick

My family immigrated from the States, and we fit right in here in Fort McMurray. My life here isn't very different from what it was like in the States, and people who don't know us have no idea that we were originally American. There are some minor differences between Canadians and Americans — like the fact that Americans aren't nearly as passionate about hockey — but really, I don't think it would make much difference to most Canadians if Canada and the United States merged. Not much would change. Canadians are already Americans in everything but name.

I was on the Net and read a speech by Ovide Mercredi, the former national chief of the Assembly of First Nations. He said that Canada is already being Americanized. He compared this with what happened to Aboriginal peoples when they were colonized. If Canadians want to know what could happen when peoples lose sovereignty, Mercredi said they should look at what has happened to Aboriginal peoples in Canada. This speech really impressed me. I wouldn't wish the Aboriginal experience on anyone, so no, I don't support North American integration.

Harley

Jean

As a Francophone, I am totally against North American integration. Francophones are already a minority in Canada. If Canada joined the United States, we'd be an even smaller minority. Keeping up our language and cultural traditions is hard enough in Canada. At least here, we have a history and the Constitution protects our rights. In the United States, we'd have no protections — and we'd be swamped.

Your Turn

How would you respond to the question Rick, Harley, and Jean are answering? Explain the reasons for your response. How important is Canadian national identity to you?

Canada and Globalization

As the world becomes more globalized, Canadians — and others — are debating the effects of globalization on national identity. Some believe that a sense of national identity will become even more important in the 21st century. Others say that the world has outgrown the idea of national identity and that it is time for a new model. For some people, the new model is global citizenship.

Canada is a world leader in promoting multiculturalism and cultural pluralism. The country has evolved — and continues to evolve — from its diverse linguistic, cultural, religious, and ethnic roots. But Canadians sometimes wonder how they can respect diversity and support national unity at the same time. The idea of keeping both unity and diversity is one of the themes of *Those Who Share Together, Stay Together*, the mural that appeared on the first page of this chapter.

The Canadian ideal of diversity is widely admired, but some people believe that it is just that: an ideal. For immigrants, especially those who belong to visible minority groups, this ideal is not always a reality. Many recent immigrants to Canada are much better educated than those who have come before. But many, including doctors, lawyers, and engineers, have trouble finding jobs in their chosen field.

Researchers at Queen's University conducted a study that measured trust among Canadians in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods. They found that when people from visible minority groups move into areas that are mainly white, the white majority becomes less trusting. And members of visible minority groups are less trusting when their neighbourhoods are largely white than when they are ethnically diverse.

With a partner, discuss who should be responsible for improving feelings of trust in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods. Should it be up to the government, to individuals, or to another group? Explain your response.

VOICES

The country needs more aggressive strategies to make sure that social mobility is still possible. That is why immigrants come to Canada. Abstract debates about multiculturalism and pluralism mean less to them than being given a real chance to succeed.

— *Marina Jiménez, immigration specialist for* The Globe and Mail, *2007*

FYI

Although the word "multicultural" has been used since the 1940s to describe societies that encourage cultural pluralism, the word "multiculturalism" was coined in Canada in 1965 — and has since been adopted by English speakers around the world.

Figure 16-15 Most immigrants settle in Canada's large cities where street scenes like this are common. How would you explain to a non-Canadian what this photograph shows?

Canada in the World

Canada is often described as a middle power — a country that is not a superpower but does have some influence on world affairs. And Canadians often take pride in their country's reputation for leadership in areas such as multiculturalism, peacekeeping, and foreign aid.

A poll that was conducted in 2008 for a number of organizations, including the CBC and *The Globe and Mail*, showed that more than 50 per cent of Canadians believe that Canada has "some influence" on world affairs. But many, such as Canadian author and cultural commentator Neil Bissoondath, questioned this conclusion. Bissoondath wonders whether Canada is living up to its reputation as a country that can — and should — play a key role in the world.

In 2008, when a food crisis was threatening people in developing countries, Jeffrey Sachs, an American adviser to United Nations secretary-general Ban Ki-moon, said, "We've seen essentially no global leadership from Canada on poverty, hunger, disease, climate change and foreign assistance."

Sachs believes that Canadians want the country to be a leader in peacekeeping and helping people in need — but the government's policies stand in the way. He said, "This has been a huge surprise for me as a lifelong admirer of Canada, that we don't see the ambition of the Canadian people [shown] in Canada's policies right now."

Should Canadians care about the views of non-Canadians such as Jeffrey Sachs? Do Sachs's comments affect your vision of Canada?

Janice Gross Stein, a Canadian political scientist, believes that Canada's diversity can make a difference in the world. Stein wrote: "Networks of immigrants now connect Canada around the globe . . . These networks are [valuable] channels as Canada seeks to make its voice heard on international issues. We should lead in developing practices of multiple citizenship to strengthen these connections."

<<< CheckBack

You read about the role of middle powers in Chapter 9.

Despite our foreign aid programs and our record in peacekeeping, Canada is a country greatly diminished since the Second World War. The truth is, we carry little weight in the world. Were the Canadian state to disappear tomorrow, many beyond our borders would notice but few would mourn.

— Neil Bissoondath, author and cultural commentator, 2000

Recall . . . Reflect . . . Respond

1. Should Canada adopt asymmetrical federalism as official policy, or should all provinces be treated equally in every way? Explain your response.
2. Should some multicultural and pluralistic policies be dropped to promote a Canadian identity? Explain your response.
3. Should Canada try to regain its position as a world leader in areas such as peacekeeping? Explain your response.

What is your vision of national identity?

The French philosopher Ernest Renan once said that a nation is "a group of people united by a mistaken view about the past and a hatred of their neighbours." Renan made this remark in the mid-1800s, when nationalism was usually based on language, religion, or ethnicity. This was before ideas about civic nations had taken hold.

Renan's comment was meant to be humorous, but it contained a grain of truth. Some people do base their idea of nation on beliefs about the past, as well as hatred of other groups. But for many more people, nationalism is based on a combination of understandings about religion, language, geography, ethnicity, and civic ideals.

Defining Your Vision

In his forward to *The New Canada*, Edward Greenspon wrote that Canadians are developing a new ethnicity that is "simply Canadian." As proof, Greenspon cited the 2001 census, when 39 per cent of people identified their ethnic origin as Canadian.

Greenspon also wrote: "The 'I am Canadian' marketing phenomenon tapped into something real: Canadians are very proud of their national identity. With no trace of irony, they proudly yell about how modest they are, and patriotically claim that they have no patriotism . . . our nationalism has become as emotional and assertive as anyone's."

Reread Greenspon's words. Would you say that he views this attitude in a positive or negative light? Why? If Canadians are developing a sense of their own identity, how might this affect their view of Canada as a nation that values diversity?

VOICES

If you don't have a nation, a country of your own, you have no platform to act in the world. In order for us to truly live up to our potential in the world, and this includes reducing international inequalities, Canada must have its own sovereignty, its own freedom to move.

— David Orchard, farmer, lawyer, and Canadian nationalist, in ZNet, *2004*

Global citizenship is when you start to break down the political borders and start to worry about people all over the world. [It's] moving away from the idea of nationalism to the responsibility of the person to the whole world.

— Keen Sung, student delegate to the Global Youth Assembly, Edmonton, 2007

Picturing Canadian Identity

Figure 16-16 **The Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France**

Many historians view the crucial role played by Canadian soldiers in the World War I Battle of Vimy Ridge as a turning point in the development of a Canadian national identity. Canada is said to have come of age at Vimy and to have found a place on the world stage. This may have been important to Canadian identity at the time — but is the story of Vimy Ridge an important part of Canadian identity today?

Figure 16-17 **Windfarm near Pincher Creek, Alberta**

Windfarms are not as familiar to Albertans as pumpjacks, but this windfarm marks a commitment to developing new energy sources. As part of their national identity, should Canadians recognize the importance of finding renewable energy sources like this windfarm?

Citizens of the World

In August 2007, Edmonton hosted the Global Youth Assembly. University of Alberta political scientist Andy Knight told the assembly: "We are all on the same planet, drinking the same water, affected by the same type of forces. And these things have no respect for national borders. Regardless of diversity and difference, we all have things in common. We are united in that diversity."

In "Voices" on the previous page, Keen Sung, a delegate to the Global Youth Assembly, said that nationalism must evolve into a sense of personal, international responsibility. And Jeffrey Sachs, who is quoted in "Voices" on this page, believes that only peoples and governments working together can solve the complex problems facing humanity today. In the view of these people and many others, national borders should not stand in the way of global co-operation.

Being able to think globally while also keeping a strong sense of national identity may be one of the greatest challenges facing people in the 21st century. Some people will choose to embrace nationalism. Others will look beyond national borders to the world. And still others will try to strike a balance between these two points of view.

To what extent should we embrace nationalism? This is the key-issue question that forms the foundation of *Understanding Nationalism*. Now that globalization and communication technologies have made the world smaller than ever, do you think this is the appropriate question? If you had been putting together this social studies course, would you have based it on a different question? Explain your response.

Despite the reveries and fantasies of some, the age of empire is over. Power is already diffusing widely in the 21st century. A new kind of global politics must take shape, built not on U.S. or Chinese pre-eminence, but on global co-operation across regions.

— *Jeffrey Sachs, in* Common Wealth: Economics for a Crowded Planet, *2008*

Figure 16-18 **Gros Morne National Park, world heritage site in Newfoundland and Labrador**

Many Canadians feel a spiritual connection to the country's unspoiled natural places. Should a commitment to conserving and protecting the environment, including this world heritage site at Gros Morne National Park in Newfoundland and Labrador, be part of Canadians' national identity?

Figure 16-19 **Fostering diversity**

Diversity means ensuring that everyone feels included. In 2007, David Onley became the first person with a disability to be appointed lieutenant-governor of Ontario. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees all Canadians equal opportunity to achieve their full potential. Should diversity be viewed as a key aspect of Canada's national identity?

Figure 16-20 **Playing a role in world affairs**

By 2008, the role of Canadian troops in Afghanistan had changed from traditional peacekeeping to peacemaking. But establishing a relationship with Afghans was still considered an important part of a soldier's job. Should Canadian identity include a commitment to peacekeeping, to peacemaking, to both, or to neither?

THINK...PARTICIPATE...RESEARCH...COMMUNICATE...

1. In this chapter, you explored responses to this question: Should I embrace a national identity?

   Based on your understanding of nation and identity, develop a response to this question. Your response may take any form you choose. You might, for example, create a poem or song, a piece of art, a video documentary, a slogan, or a poster. Present your response to the class and be prepared to explain and defend your point of view.

2. Read the excerpt from the poem "I Am a Canadian" by Duke Redbird. Redbird is a poet, storyteller, actor, broadcaster, and member of the Saugeen First Nation in Ontario. He wrote the poem in 1977.

   a) What national identity is Duke Redbird expressing?

   b) Redbird wrote this poem more than 30 years ago. Add a few more lines to update the poem. Ensure that your lines capture your feelings about Canadian national identity today.

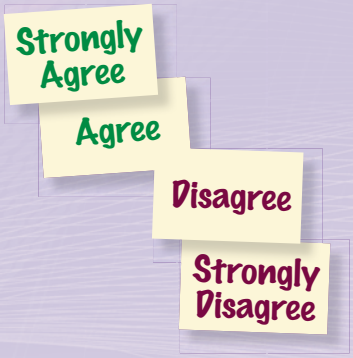
I Am a Canadian

I'm Sir John A. Macdonald
I'm Alexander Graham Bell
I'm a pow-wow dancer
And I'm Louis Riel
I'm the Calgary Stampede
I'm a feathered Sarcee
I'm Edmonton at night . . .

I'm a maple tree and a totem pole
I'm sunshine showers
And fresh-cut flowers
I'm a ferry boat ride to the Island
I'm the Yukon
I'm the Northwest Territories
I'm the Arctic Ocean and the Beaufort Sea
I'm the prairies, I'm the Great Lakes,
I'm the Rockies, I'm the Laurentians
I am French
I am English
And I am Métis
But more than this
Above all this
I am a Canadian and proud to be free.

Skill Builder to Your Challenge

Develop Relevant Questions



The challenge for Related Issue 4 asks you to participate in a four-corners debate on this statement: Individuals and groups in Canada should embrace a national identity.

In this skill builder, you will plan questions to ask others about their positions in the debate. You will also prepare to answer questions others may ask you. As you do this, you will hone your skill at contributing to discussions, as well as your critical-thinking, social-participation, and communication skills.

Step 1: Think about possible positions

Think about the four possible positions you could take on the debate statement. As you do this, consider your journal entries and your discussions with other students. Note the strongest arguments people might present in favour of each of the four debate positions.

Step 2: Develop questions

Review the section in the prologue on powerful questions (p. 17). Then develop questions that will help you and other students explore the issue behind the debate statement.

Remember that your goal is not to win an argument but to understand other students' positions — and perhaps to revise your own position. The questions you develop should reflect these goals.

Think about the following points:

- **How can I make my questions relevant?** Ask questions that focus on what the speaker has said and that will promote discussion of the issue behind the debate statement.
- **How can I improve my understanding of why a speaker has taken a position?** Asking about the criteria used may help clarify a position.
- **How can I decide what more I need to know to understand a speaker's position?** Prepare questions that ask for clarification or more information.

Step 3: Develop responses to questions

You should also expect to defend your position. Prepare for this by answering the questions you have developed to ask others. Discuss your position with a partner and explain why you took your position. Ask each other questions that someone taking a different position might ask.

Step 4: Consolidate your position

On the basis of your partner's feedback, as well as by answering your own questions and, if necessary, conducting additional research, prepare your position statement — and decide where you will stand when the debate starts.

Step 5: Help build a class consensus

Once the debate is over, participate with your classmates to develop a consensus on the key course-issue question: To what extent should we embrace nationalism?